



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

News Release

Aug 8, 2005

FEDERAL INDICTMENT UNSEALED AGAINST EIGHTEEN MEMBERS OF SUR-13 STREET GANG IN ATLANTA

ATLANTA, GA -- David E. Nahmias, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia; Kenneth A. Smith, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Department of Homeland Security; Gregory Jones, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation; and law enforcement authorities from Atlanta, Fulton, Cobb, DeKalb, Gwinnett and Alpharetta announce the unsealing of a federal grand jury indictment against 18 members of a violent street gang known as "Sureños-13," also known as "SUR-13."

The indictment charges 14 defendants with being part of a racketeering conspiracy and 3 additional defendants with violent crimes related to racketeering. The indictment was returned under seal on July 12th and unsealed on August 5th to allow the coordinated arrest of the defendants. According to Nahmias and the indictments unsealed today:

Regarding the racketeering charges, the indictment alleges predicate crimes including murder, attempted murder, carjacking, armed robbery, and drug dealing. The indictment also charges 8 defendants with conspiring to possess and possessing with the intent to distribute methamphetamine and marijuana, 4 defendants with armed carjacking, and 12 defendants with firearms charges, including possessing, carrying, using, and discharging a firearm during and in relation to violent crimes and drug trafficking. The defendants charged are:

ARMANDO PRUDENTE, a/k/a "Charra," 33, of Atlanta; NICASO CALDERON URIBE, a/k/a "Chico," 34, of Atlanta; CARLOS MANUEL LORENZANA, a/k/a "Negro," 28, of Atlanta; ROBERTO SANDOVAL, a/k/a "Charrita," 23, of Atlanta; FREDDIE SANDOVAL, a/k/a "Enano," 21, of Lawrenceville; ISRAEL CRUZ, a/k/a "Mananitas," 26, of Atlanta; AVILA GILBERTO MALDONADO, a/k/a "Roris," 26, of Atlanta; JORGE FLORES, a/k/a "Shadow," 28, of Atlanta; ALEJANDRO SALGADO, 25, of Marietta, Georgia; ARTURO SANCHEZ, a/k/a "Heuro Pipas," 28, of Atlanta; ANGEL MAZAIEGOS, a/k/a "Grumpy," 22, of Atlanta; RICARDO GAMA, a/k/a "Kiwi," 27, of Atlanta; CARLOS MARTINEZ, a/k/a "Lil' Beto," 22, of Atlanta; JOSE TAPIA, 22, of Atlanta; EMANUEL AVILA-VILLASANA, a/k/a "Creepy," 21, of Atlanta; RODOLFO PEREZ, a/k/a "Chino," 26, of Lawrenceville, Georgia; EDGAR PEREZ, a/k/a "Cholo," 25, of Lawrenceville, Georgia, and LUIS ALBERTO NANDY, a/k/a "Cepillin," 21, of Atlanta.

As of today, 16 named defendants have been arrested on the unsealed indictment. United States Attorney Nahmias said the indictment was part of a two-year investigation into the activities of Sureños-13. In addition to this indictment, the operation included the arrest and federal prosecution

of 7 other Sureños-13 gang members, the deportation of 40 members, and the seizure of 13 firearms and \$7,000 in cash over the course of the investigation.

Also arrested this weekend were approximately 11 SUR-13 members and associates who were residing illegally in the U.S. and who will likely face administrative deportation.

The charges were made public at a news conference this morning, which included representatives from the District Attorneys of Cobb, Fulton, DeKalb and Gwinnett Counties, and the Atlanta, Alpharetta and Gwinnett County Police Departments. The law enforcement agencies participate in the Law Enforcement Gang Interdiction Task Force (LEGIT), which has cooperatively investigated the case with ICE and the FBI.

At the news conference, United States Attorney David Nahmias said, "As alleged in the indictment, members of Sur-13 were responsible for a significant amount of drug and violent crime occurring within Fulton, DeKalb, Gwinnett, and Cobb Counties over the last several years. This indictment is an important step in combating the problems that violent street gangs such as this pose throughout the district. The use of federal racketeering and drug conspiracy statutes to attack a gang's entire leadership is consistent with the North Georgia anti-gang strategy developed in conjunction with the Anti-Gang Law Enforcement Summit recently held in the District."

ICE Special Agent In Charge Kenneth Smith said, "The success of this joint operation can be attributed to the cooperation and commitment of several local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies in the Atlanta area. By targeting the leadership of this criminal organization, we will have a significant impact on their illegal activities, resulting in safer neighborhoods and communities. ICE is proud to be part of this collaborative effort."

FBI Special Agent In Charge Greg Jones said of the case, "The combined efforts of the multiple law enforcement agencies involved in this investigation, to include the significant contributions and leadership of the Law Enforcement Gang Interdiction Task Force, has proven extremely effective in combating this crime problem and they should be commended for their tireless efforts."

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment contains only allegations. A defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove a defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

The case is being investigated by Special Agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Assistance in this case is being provided by the Cobb County Police Department, the Fulton County Police Department, the Gwinnett County Police Department and (others).

Assistant United States Attorney Kim S. Dammers is prosecuting the case. For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney or Yonette Sam-Buchanan, Chief, Terrorism, Violent Crimes and Firearms Unit, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan <<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan>>.

The information contained in this release was taken from a U.S. Attorney's news release from the Northern District of Georgia.

#ICE#

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities